Jacaranda

PROVENANCE

Traditional African, Oceanic and Native American Art

Jacaranda

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Background image: Detail, mere pounamu, *illustrated p. 21*

"Who buys your art?" is a question I am often asked. In answering, I am reminded that the collectors acquiring these extraordinary objects are as varied and interesting as the objects themselves.

With this in mind, we created our online catalogue, *Provenance: Traditional African, Oceanic and Native American Art.*

Collectors of tribal art tend to be sophisticated and confident in their choices. Unlike many art collectors, they are not swayed or influenced by the "flavor of the month." They are keen observers and use all their senses, seeing and touching the patinated and carved surfaces that tell them about the age and use of an object. There are familiar scents that they recognize and they have an ability to look into the soul of an object. They know that size only *sometimes* matters; a small object can convey the same powerful presence as a large one. They can appreciate brut as well as classical beauty.

Whenever I acquire a new object I want to know its history. Sometimes it is lost and I must accept never knowing the identity of the previous owners. Other times, with careful research and sleuthing, we may discover a fascinating array of previous owners that provide a "fourth dimension" to the piece.

For me, and I surmise for many of you, this is part of the excitement and pleasure of adding a new object to our collection. As caretakers and protectors, in time our ownership continues the story of the piece.

Certain collector provenances are considered blue chip due to their fame, associations and wealth. While I appreciate these pedigrees, I continue to be fascinated by lesser-known but equally impressive men and women who are members of our collecting tribe.

I hope you enjoy this eclectic selection.

Dori Rootenberg
March 2018

ANTELOPE MASK, *ZAMBLE*

Guro, Côte d'Ivoire

19th century
17" h 6.5" w
Wood
Provenance: Félix Fénéon; Kurt Delbanco
Published in *Facing the Mask*, Frank Herreman, 2002, Museum for African Art, New York (cat. 55)

This mask depicts Zamble, a mythical male figure central to the religious masquerade tradition of the Guro. Fusing antelope and leopard features, Zamble is one in a sequence of three sacred masks, complemented by his beautiful wife, Gu, and his wild, grotesque brother, Zuali. Such representations are owned by certain families that use them as the loci of sacrificial offerings proposed by diviners to improve their well-being.

A deep, brooding surface darkened by pigment and patina increases the drama and underlying sense of power in this expertly carved mask. Attributes of predator and prey are here bound as one – sinuous antelope horns and fearsome leopard maw – and between them a pair of haunting, cowry-shaped eyes. The reverse, pictured below, bears Fénéon's numeral *3*, indicating one of the earliest entries in his collection.

PROVENANCE

Félix Fénéon (1861–1944)

Félix Fénéon was an art dealer, collector, curator, political activist, and critic. Born in Turin, Italy, he spent much of his life immersed in the literary and art worlds of Paris. Between 1905 and 1925 Fénéon directed the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune and championed the cause of Neo-Impressionism, in particular the work of Georges Seurat. By the early 1920s he had amassed a major collection of tribal works, a portion of which was shown in a large African art exhibition entitled *L'Exposition de l'art indigène des colonies françaises* at the Pavillon de Marsan in 1923.

Paul Signac, *Opus 217. Against the Enamel of a Background Rhythmic with Beats and Angles, Tones, and Tints, Portrait of M. Félix Fénéon in 1890*, 1890

Kurt Delbanco (1909–2007)

Born in Hamburg, Germany, Kurt Delbanco was introduced to African art in his childhood by his parents, who were art collectors. The family lost nearly everything in their flight from the Nazi regime to London in 1936, and Delbanco later resettled his own family in Westchester County, New York a few years after World War II. During this period he became a dedicated collector in his own right, fascinated with Impressionist paintings, African art, Old Master prints and more.

A man noted for inveterate optimism, Delbanco was a businessman, art dealer, painter and sculptor, and worked as an artist till the last days of his life. His portraits have been collected by the National Portrait Gallery and the Museum of the City of New York, among others.

DOLL, *KACHINA*

Hopi, American Southwest

19th century
12" h 5.5" w
Wood, cloth, horsehair, tin, beads, pigment
Provenance: Frank Harvey Collection; George Heye Foundation, 1919; Julius Carlebach, July 1946; Enrico Donati

Kachina (*katsina)* dolls are carved representations of the Katsinam, spirit messengers from the ancestral underworld that embody aspects of life for the Hopi of the southwestern United States. Traditionally such dolls are used as teaching tools, given to girls in infancy to help them learn about the responsibilities they will bear in their communities as women. This particular doll, according to the Smithsonian's collection history, is a portrayal of the spirit Tshoshbushnaka.

Highlighted with bold stripes of black and red, this doll is replete with lovely details which invite close examination. Armed with a slender spear and stitched shield decorated with a four-pointed star, it is garbed in a delicate tunic tied at the right shoulder, with a cloth and tin *concho* belt circling its waist. A strong, central hourglass design anchors the mask of the doll's face, flanked by pothook eyes and half-lozenge ears pierced with turquoise and bead earrings. Its coiffure, made of horsehair, trails down the back to the waist, where it is tied with thin yarn. The junction of the mask and body is concealed by a ring-shaped ruff. Such ruffs were also used in the kachina dance tradition, crafted of fur or spruce.

While many kachina dolls express a somewhat remote, monumental feeling in their design, this doll seems to carry itself with a sense of casual candor and human personality that lend it a remarkable charm.

Chief of the Kachina Dance at the Moki (Cliff Dwellers) Village of Sichomovi, Arizona, 1901, by Underwood & Underwood

PROVENANCE

Enrico Donati (1909–2008)

A renowned Surrealist painter of remarkable talent and singular vision, Enrico Donati's passion for visual art began as a fascination with the Native American art collections at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris in the early 1930s, when he was a student of music. The works he saw there caused him to travel to the American Southwest shortly thereafter, to meet the people of the cultures who could have created such art and to begin a collection of his own. In the following years he dedicated himself fully to art, first undertaking formal studies in Paris and then relocating at the outbreak of World War II to New York City, where the virtues of his work quickly placed him in the inner circle of the Surrealist movement alongside luminaries such as Marcel Duchamp, Yves Tanguy, Max Ernst, Roberto Matta, and Arshile Gorky.

Though powerfully drawn to Native American art for its "eloquence," "humanity," and its use of color, Donati never appropriated the imagery or techniques of Southwest artists during his career, his relationship with them remaining a spiritual and psychological one.

PROVENANCE

Fred Harvey (1835–1901)

Born in London in 1835, Frederick Henry Harvey was a driven entrepreneur who found dramatic success in the hospitality industry of the developing American West. At its peak, the Fred Harvey Company operated a vast network of restaurants, souvenir shops and hotels, serving travelers along the growing rail networks of the Southwest, a region whose now-iconic cultural and commercial image Harvey helped shape. The incorporation of regional traditional art and "curios" into the Company's brand experience, which began as a distinctive marketing strategy, eventually became a dedicated art acquisition mission. An Indian Department was created by the Company in the first years of the twentieth century through the efforts of Harvey's daughter, Minnie Harvey Huckel, and son-in-law, Herman Schweizer. With remarkable local access and a vast budget, the Company amassed a major collection of pottery, basketry, textiles, kachina dolls and beadwork, selections from which now reside in the holdings of many leading museums across the United States.

PROVENANCE

George & Thea Heye with Wey-hu-si-wa (Zuni), governor of Zuni Pueblo, and Lorenzo Chavez (Zuni) on the steps of the Museum of the American Indian in 1923.

George Gustav Heye (1874–1957)

Born in New York's Hudson River Valley, George Heye was one of the world's greatest collectors of Native American art. Educated as an electrical engineer, he acquired his first piece – a Navajo deerskin skirt – while supervising railroad work in Arizona in 1897. Heye continued to collect throughout the following years, during which time he pursued a new career as an investment banker, and eventually accumulated what was the largest private Native American art collection in the world. This incredible assemblage, encompassing some 800,000 objects at its fullest extent, found its first official home at the Heye Foundation's Museum of the American Indian, opened in 1922 at 155th Street and Broadway in New York City. The Museum relocated in 1994 when the Smithsonian Institution, which had acquired Heye's collection five years earlier, opened the Heye Center of the National Museum of the American Indian in the former Custom House in lower Manhattan.

Julius Carlebach (1909–1964)

Born in Lübuck, Germany, Julius Carlebach studied ethnology and history as a young man at universities in Berlin, Hamburg, and Vienna. In 1931 he opened a gallery in Berlin, specializing in antiquities, and he was soon joined by his wife, Josefa, whose chosen field was African and Oceanic art. Fleeing the Third Reich in 1937, the Carlebachs opened their first New York gallery in 1939. Julius sold innumerable icons of African, Oceanic, and Native American art from Carlebach Galleries, Inc., located at 1040 Madison Avenue. He is particularly well remembered for selling masterpieces of Eskimo art from the Heye Foundation, for introducing the French Surrealists to Native American art, and for holding the first exhibition of Roy Lichtenstein's work in 1951.

PRESTIGE LADLE

Sotho, Southern Africa

Mid-19th century
21.5" h 4.5" w
Wood
Provenance: Brimo de Laroussilhe; Béla Hein, January 1928
Exhibited at the Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, New York
Published in *Constellations*, Neuberger Museum of Art

Figurative spoons from southern Africa are exceedingly rare. Large prestige ladles with early provenance are rarer still.

This surrealist masterpiece bears many figurative elements, and one can only guess at their intended symbolism. The spoon's central sculptural element is a figure wearing a hat, face downturned, with comically small arms providing a striking counterpoint to an enormous belly. Throughout Africa, rotund bellies typically symbolize chiefs or other individuals commanding prestige and power. The hat is typical of those worn by Sotho men to keep the rain off as they shepherded their herds on horseback over cold, damp, mountainous terrain. Beneath its large belly, the figure's feet seem to be disappearing into the mouth of a large fish. A reptile, possibly a monitor lizard or crocodile, straddles the rear of the spoon's shaft, while on the terminal is found a large hoof that becomes a face when turned upside down.

Aesthetically, this remarkable ladle is possibly the only known example of its kind. Spoons from the Sotho in southern Africa depict animal figures, but none rival the exemplary level of sculptural execution and imagination shown here. Considering its size and elaborate design, this ladle was undoubtedly intended for use by a high-ranking individual on ceremonial occasions.

PROVENANCE

Portrait of Mme. Béla Hein by André Derain

Béla Hein (1883–1931)

Legendary as a collector and dealer of tribal art but as an individual a cipher, the life of Béla Hein today remains something of a mystery. What is known is that Hein was born in Kremnica, now in Slovakia, and emigrated to Paris in 1910, where he became one of the first in European art circles to appreciate what was then called "Negro art." Over the next decade, aided by Belgian antique dealer Henri Pareyn, he built a sensational collection of African objects that reflected a special love for Lega ivories. In 1923 Hein opened a gallery on Rue des Saints-Pères, where he dealt in paintings as well as tribal art. He died less than ten years later, and after his passing his wife, pictured above, continued dealing in art under the name Bela Hein.

Brimo de Laroussilhe

One of the most well-known antiquities dealerships in Paris, Brimo de Laroussilhe was opened in 1908 by Nicolas Brimo, who had established himself as an antiques dealer around that time. Shortly thereafter he partnered with his brother-in-law, Lucien Lascombes de Laroussilhe, to found the gallery as it is known today. At that time Brimo de Laroussilhe dealt in art from a wide range of cultures and eras, but from 1991 onward, under the leadership of Philippe Carlier, the gallery has focused exclusively on the arts of medieval Europe and the Renaissance.

HEADREST

Zulu, South Africa

19th century
16.25" l 6" h
Wood
Provenance: Arthur Thomas Todd-White; Jonathan Lowen; Kevin Conru
Published in *Belgium Collects African Art*, Brussels, 2000; *The Art of Southeast Africa*, 2008
Exhibited at Rotterdam Kunsthalle, 1999

This impressive headrest features a rectangular rest supported by four sinuous legs, each of which touches the ground in two places. Employing a technique common in large wood vessels from Zulu territory (see example below), the legs are laboriously carved with ridges over the entirety of their serpentine surface, delivering dramatic aesthetic impact.

Headrests were important and ubiquitous objects in southern Africa, used not only to preserve high-maintenance coiffures during sleep but to facilitate communication with ancestors through dreams. In cultures where personal effects were often few and one traveled lightly, headrests were some of the only sizable objects that served as permanent possessions, and they were often passed down through generations as valued heirlooms. Brides often commissioned paired headrests, one for themselves and one for their bridegroom. The headrest that formed a pair with the piece presented here is now part of the Brenthurst Collection at the Johannesburg Art Gallery.

Zulu prestige vessel
South Africa
19th century

T. TODD-WHITE,
WENTWORTH LODGE,
LEYTONSTONE

PROVENANCE

Engraving depicting Guy's Hospital, Southwark, by J. Rogers after N. Whittock

Arthur Thomas Todd-White (1869–1948)

Arthur Thomas Todd-White was born the son of historian William White in Sheffield, England. He was a medical man, receiving his education at Guy's Hospital (pictured above), where he served as clinical assistant before taking the role of house-surgeon at Lancaster Infirmary. Todd-White later opened a general practice of his own, establishing himself in Leytonstone in 1898. There he acted in numerous medical roles, and during World War I he was one of the founders of the National Volunteer Reserve and later commanded the 3rd Essex Volunteer Battalion.

Todd-White's interests exceeded the bounds of medicine to encompass the fields of geology, archaeology, ornithology, and philately. Never entirely adjusted to the "mechanical age," he often dwelt in reveries of overseas travels he undertook during his time as a medical student. Todd-White sailed to Australia in the late 1800s and visited South Africa sometime around the turn of the century, during which time he acquired the Swazi headrest presented here.

Jonathan Lowen

Jonathan Lowen was born in South Africa and emigrated to the United Kingdom in the late 1960s, where he became a practicing judge. In the 1970s, whilst living in London, Lowen began collecting African art from diverse sources including antique dealers, Portobello Road Market, and at auction. In time he succeeded in building the finest South African art collection in private hands. The Johannesburg Art Gallery, wanting to acquire the collection but unable to raise funds, ultimately received it on long-term loan after it was purchased by South African businessman and philanthropist Harry Oppenheimer, who renamed it the Brenthurst Collection. Much of Lowen's collection was illustrated in *Art and Ambiguity: Perspectives on the Brenthurst Collection of Southern African Art,* published by the Johannesburg Art Gallery in 1991.

HAND CLUB, *MERE POUNAMU*

Maori, New Zealand

18th century
14.5" h 4.25" w
Greenstone *(pounamu)*
Provenance: Kurt Delbanco

Known as *mere pounamu*, this paddle-like club is a classic Maori weapon form. Sharing a close likeness to their counterparts, *patu,* which were made of basalt, bone, and wood, *mere pounamu* were superior weapons, crafted exclusively of precious, durable greenstone and wielded only by chieftans. Carefully smoothed to a narrow plane, the blade of this light club could land thrusting blows against an opponent with deadly speed. Like other greenstone objects, *mere pounamu* were recognized as carriers of *mana,* or spiritual power, which accrued through deeds and generations. As such, these weapons were highly prized as battle trophies and heirlooms.

The small hole near the pommel was a typical feature of one-handed Maori weapons, used to secure a wrist cord. Such holes were cut using flywheel drills of native manufacture or, after European contact, pump drills. An indentation was bored just to the core of the stone, then again from the opposite side, meeting in the middle to create an hourglass-shaped aperture.

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Kurt Delbanco (1909–2007)

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TRUMPET (OLIPHANT)

Fang, Gabon

19th century
17" h
Ivory
Provenance: J.J. Klejman; Dr. Malcolm Hardy, Chapel Hill, NC

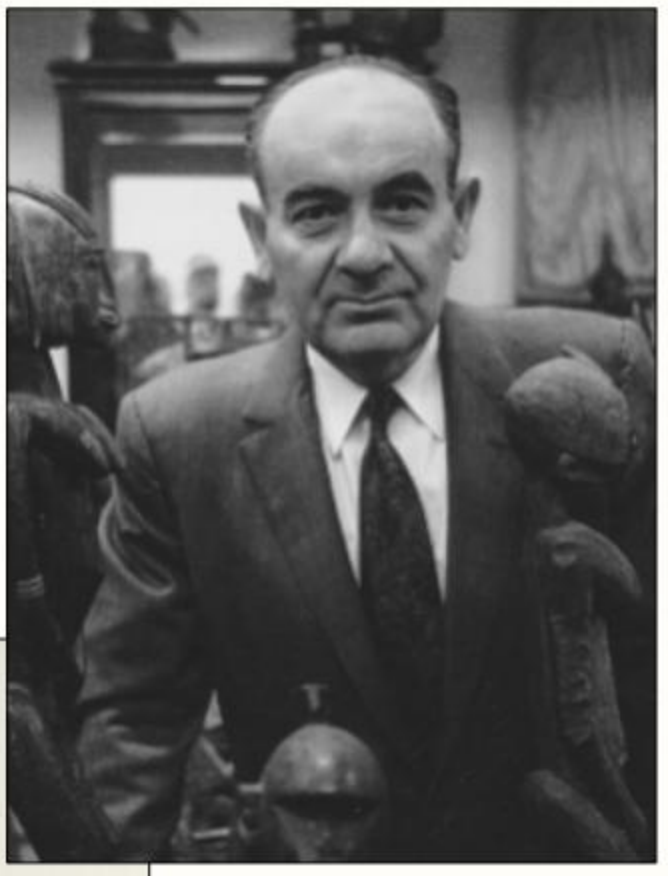
Side-blown trumpets made of animal horn or tusk, known as oliphants, are found throughout Africa. They often symbolize kingly power, and those associated with royal ensembles are decorated with skins, wooden extensions and carvings. Oliphants were used to accompany dances and to signal the king's arrival and departure.

This graceful ivory oliphant from the Fang tribe was carved from the tip of a tusk. At the peak of the instrument's gentle arc is found a double-janiform terminal bearing four soft faces, worn smooth with use. These multiple faces most likely symbolize great power of sight – into the past and present, and into our world and that of the ancestors. A rich, warm color of age has enriched the surface and luster of this trumpet with a sensual depth.

The custom base for this work was crafted by Inagaki in the 1920s.

PROVENANCE

J.J. Klejman (1906–1995)



An antique dealer during his early years in Warsaw, Klejman left Poland before World War II. Settling in New York City, he began a new life with his wife, Halina (1908–2007), opening J.J. Klejman Works of Art at 982 Madison Avenue. His primary business was antiquities, but he also provided African and sometimes Oceanic art to major collections. The Klejmans closed their gallery and retired in the 1980s, relocating to Washington, DC.

Rosemary Lewandowski-Lois, *Merchants of the Gods – Mr. & Mrs. J.J. Klejman*, 1970

Kichizo Inagaki (1876–1951)

Celebrated basemaker Inagaki thrived in the art world of 20th-century Paris but remains somewhat mysterious today. Born in the village of Murakami, Japan, he honed his skills as an artist and craftsman before traveling to Paris in 1906. There he gained a quiet fame for his sensitive and innovative approaches to the creation of pedestals – minimalist sculptures in their own right – that merged in aesthetic harmony with the objects they supported.

PROCESSIONAL CROSS

Ethiopia

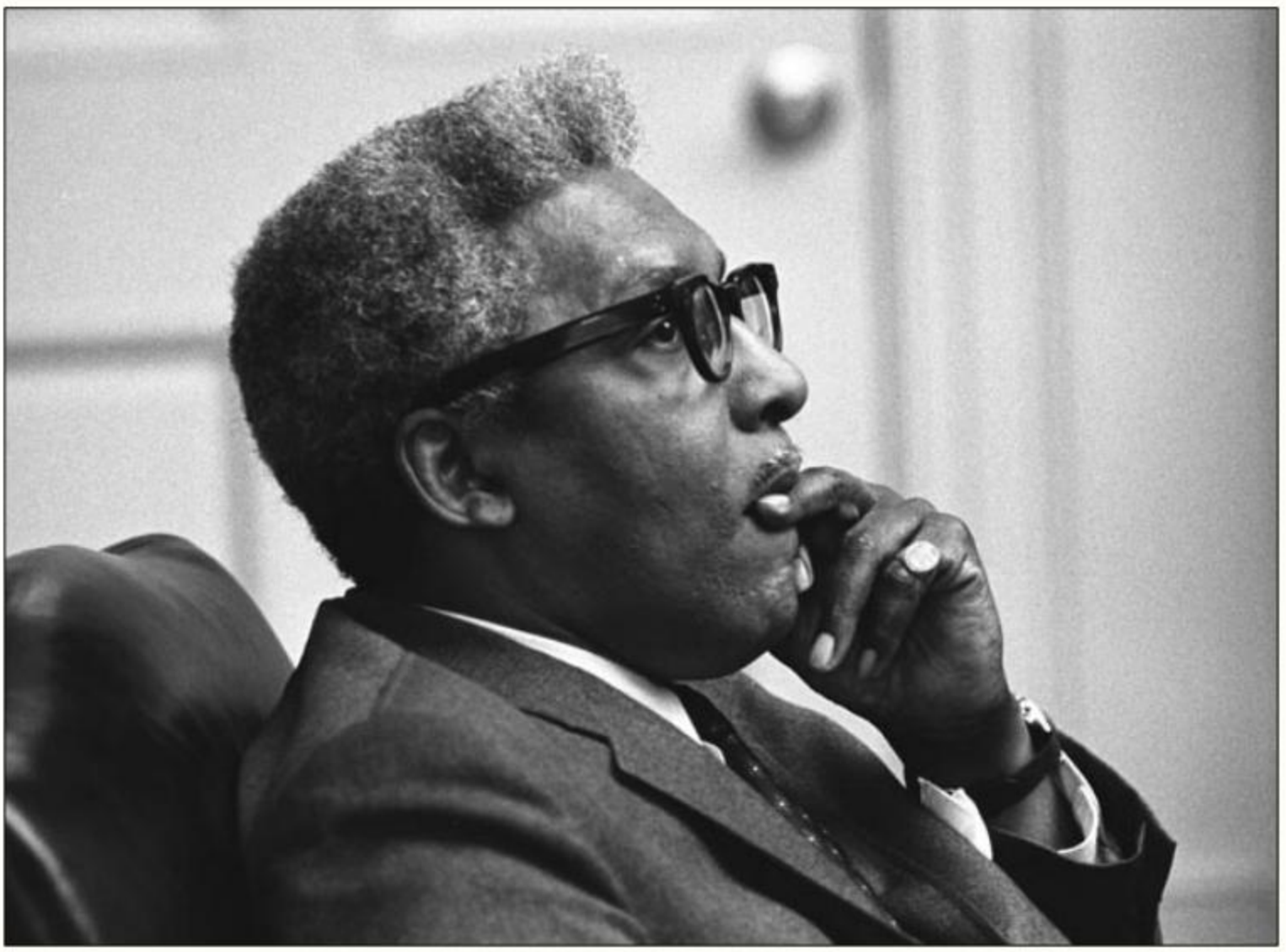
Circa 1700
12” h 3.25” w
Wood
Provenance: Bayard Rustin

In Ethiopia, home of one of the earliest Christian civilizations, the cross has been developed with more variety of artistic form than anywhere else in the world. The first crosses known in Ethiopia were probably imported from Christian Egypt around 400 A.D., but the motif eventually took on aesthetic characteristics not found elsewhere in Christian culture.

Wooden processional crosses were sometimes produced in remote areas of Ethiopia where metal-working was less common, and many date from the decades following the devastation of the Christian highlands in the sixteenth century by Ahmad Gra'an, general of the Adal Sultanate. Such wooden examples often incorporate some distinct local elements and can appear crude. The cross presented here, on the other hand, was carved in fine canonical tradition by a trained artisan, likely one attached to a larger monastery adjoining the court at Gondar. This piece dates from what is known as the Gondarene era, a period that marked a significant revival of Ethiopian artistic traditions.

This beautiful cross, exquisitely carved from a single piece of wood, would have been held aloft during ritual processions. Its diamond-shaped frame, elaborated with many smaller crosses, holds a central cross with broad, flared arms and motifs suggesting knotwork. A thin ridge grows and descends from the heart of the cross, expanding and extending into the long, elegantly shaped shaft, implying the Tree of life. Opposing loops, sometimes referred to as "Adam's arms,” form a rectangular foundation below the cross, anchoring and balancing it.

PROVENANCE



Bayard Rustin (1912–1987)

Bayard Rustin was a leading figure and activist in American social movements in the twentieth century. Heavily involved in the struggles for civil rights and gay rights, he was an outspoken socialist and an ardent advocate for nonviolent protest. From the mid-1950s through the mid-1960s he became a noted civil rights strategist, influencing the philosophy and methods of Martin Luther King, Jr. and serving as chief organizer of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. For much of his later career he focused on the economic and political empowerment of black Americans and served on numerous humanitarian missions. In 2013 he was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama.

Rustin was also a sophisticated and passionate art collector. Over a span of forty years, starting in the late 1940s, he amassed an eclectic collection of fifteenth-to-seventeenth-century religious art and icons, African-American memorabilia, furniture, tribal art and more.

POUNDER, *TUKI*

Tonga

18th century
10.75" h
Wood
Provenance: Sir Thomas Berry Cusack-Smith; Sold by the executors of his daughter at Graffham Court House sale, November 1988

Amongst the rarest objects from Polynesia is the Tongan *tuki,* or food pounder. These bulbous objects, mistaken by early collectors for Fijian throwing clubs, were used by Tongan women to grind breadfruit to make a pudding called *faikakai*. *Faikakai* is still eaten in Tonga today, but the reasons for which the *tuki* fell out of use after the eighteenth century are unknown.

Of the seven known examples listed in Adrienne Kaeppler's *Artificial Curiosities: Exposition of Native Manufactures Collected on the Three Pacific Voyages of Captain James Cook,* six have eighteenth-century provenance and were collected and taken to Europe by Captain James Cook. They now reside in museums at Cambridge, Oxford, Wörlitz, Göttingen and Vienna.

The *tuki* presented here, which may have been collected on one of Captain Cook's voyages, is possibly the finest known example. The patina evidences great age and extended use, the form is pure and elegant (the overtly phallic shape for an object reserved for women was no doubt intentional), and the rarity is unquestioned.

Graffham Court

PROVENANCE

King Malietoa of Samoa and Sir Thomas Berry Cusack-Smith, posed with a group of men equipped for polo

Sir Thomas Berry Cusack-Smith (1859–1929)

Sir Thomas Berry Cusack-Smith was the British Consul to Samoa from 1890 until 1898, a position for which he rivaled with his friend, author Robert Louis Stevenson. During his appointment he kept extensive diaries that together form an important social history of Samoa which might otherwise have gone unrecorded. His archive contains numerous photographs taken by himself and others, including portraits of Samoan islanders, documentation of landscapes and fortifications, and scenes of sport and leisure. Cusack-Smith was an avid sportsman, spending much of his free time in boating, polo, hunting and other outdoor activities, and was hugely influential in introducing polo to the islands. He acted as patron of local sporting clubs and would organize contests whenever British ships put in at the main port of Apia.

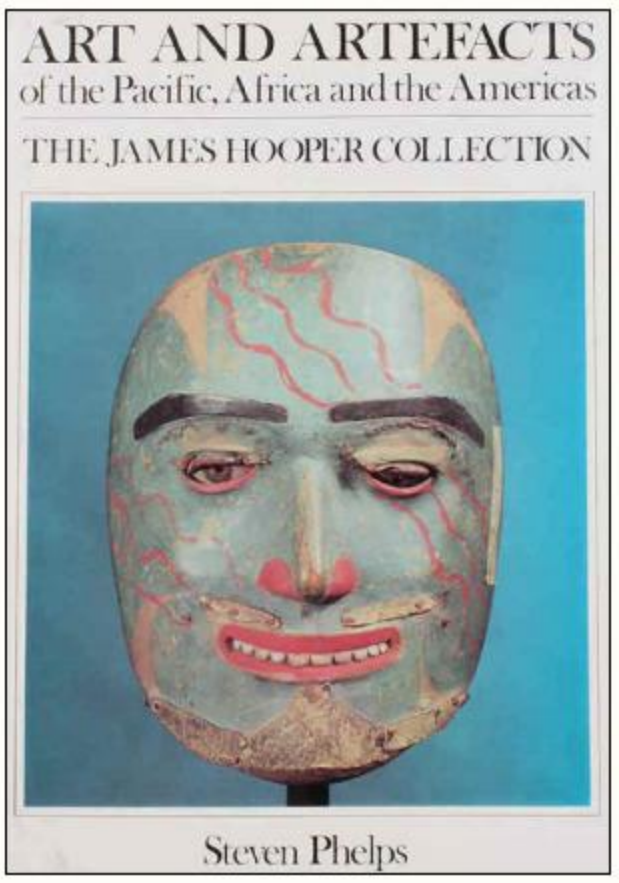
TAPA BEATER

Central Polynesia, probably Tahiti

18th or 19th century
16.5" l 2" w
Wood
Provenance: James Hooper; Norman Hurst
Published in *Art and Artefacts of the Pacific, Africa and the Americas: The James Hooper Collection*

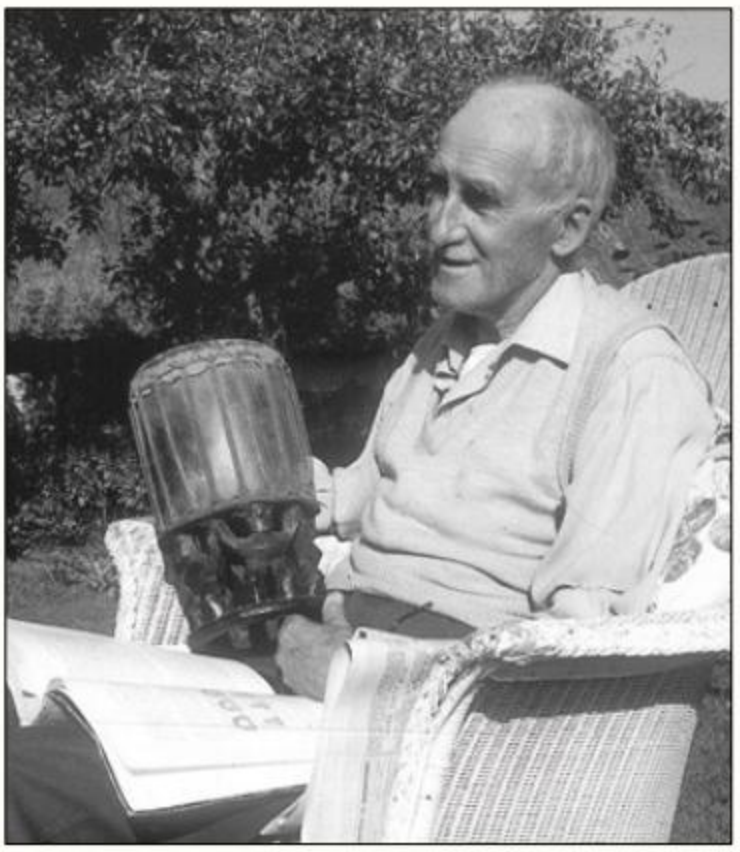
Tapa cloth (or simply tapa) is a barkcloth produced in the islands of the Pacific Ocean. Most commonly made from the bark of the mulberry tree, the cloth was primarily used for clothing. When crafting tapa, bark is beaten into strips on a wooden anvil using wooden mallets or tapa beaters. Once the strips are thin enough, several are taken and beaten together into a large sheet. The making of tapa was the domain of women, and often the women of an entire village would work together to create a single, huge sheet.

This early example of a tapa beater, with its unusual, pointed tip and original Hooper collection number, is a particularly fine and rare one. Illustrated twice in *Art and Artefacts of the Pacific, Africa and the Americas: The James Hooper Collection* (pictured below), it is erroneously described there as originating from New Guinea. All four sides of the beater bear repetitive, incised patterns that were used to both pound the tapa and impress decorative designs into the flattened cloth.



PROVENANCE

James Hooper (1897–1971)



James Thomas Hooper was a British collector of ethnographic artifacts of the Inuit, Native American, Oceanic and African peoples. He began collecting in 1912 when his father gave him a native spear. Hooper became an employee of the Thames Conservancy Board but collecting was his obsession. He scoured flea markets and small antique shops in rural England for items of interest and purchased from auction houses, private museums and house sales. He also organized exchanges with other dealers and collectors such as William Ockelford Oldman and Kenneth Athol Webster. At the height of his collecting in the 1950s, he was one of the top four collectors of Pacific ethnographic material in the UK.

Hooper's interest in collecting tribal material was ethnological rather than aesthetic. Like Oldman, Hooper never left Great Britain to visit the cultures that created the material he enjoyed. After retirement he opened the Totems Museum in Arundel, Sussex, which he ran between 1957 and 1963. Hooper's collection continued to be documented after his death in 1971, and it was showcased in *Art and Artefacts of the Pacific, Africa and the Americas: The James Hooper Collection,* a book authored by his grandson, Steven Hooper, which was published in 1976.

Norman Hurst (1944–2011)

Norman Hurst was a highly respected American art dealer and certified appraiser. For over thirty years he was the proprietor of Hurst Gallery in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a unique town fixture through which he introduced countless patrons to the beauty and significance of non-Western arts. Hurst also served as a consultant to both museums and private art collectors, providing appraisals, planning exhibitions, and advising on the development of collections. He was one of a handful of appraisers with comprehensive expertise in the arts of Asia, the Classical Mediterranean, Egypt and the Middle East, Africa, the Americas, and the islands of the Pacific.

Hurst lived for many years in the United Kingdom, where he acquired many fine African and Oceanic objects. He kept a private collection of South African works, many of which were acquired by Jacaranda when he sold most of his collection in the midst of his battle with cancer. During one of our last visits, he recounted finding one of the icons of southern African art, the great Sotho figurative pipe (pictured at right), on a visit to the Brimfield Flea Market. He sold the piece to Dr. Werner Muensterberger, who in turn sold it to the National Museum of African Art in Washington, DC, where it remains today.

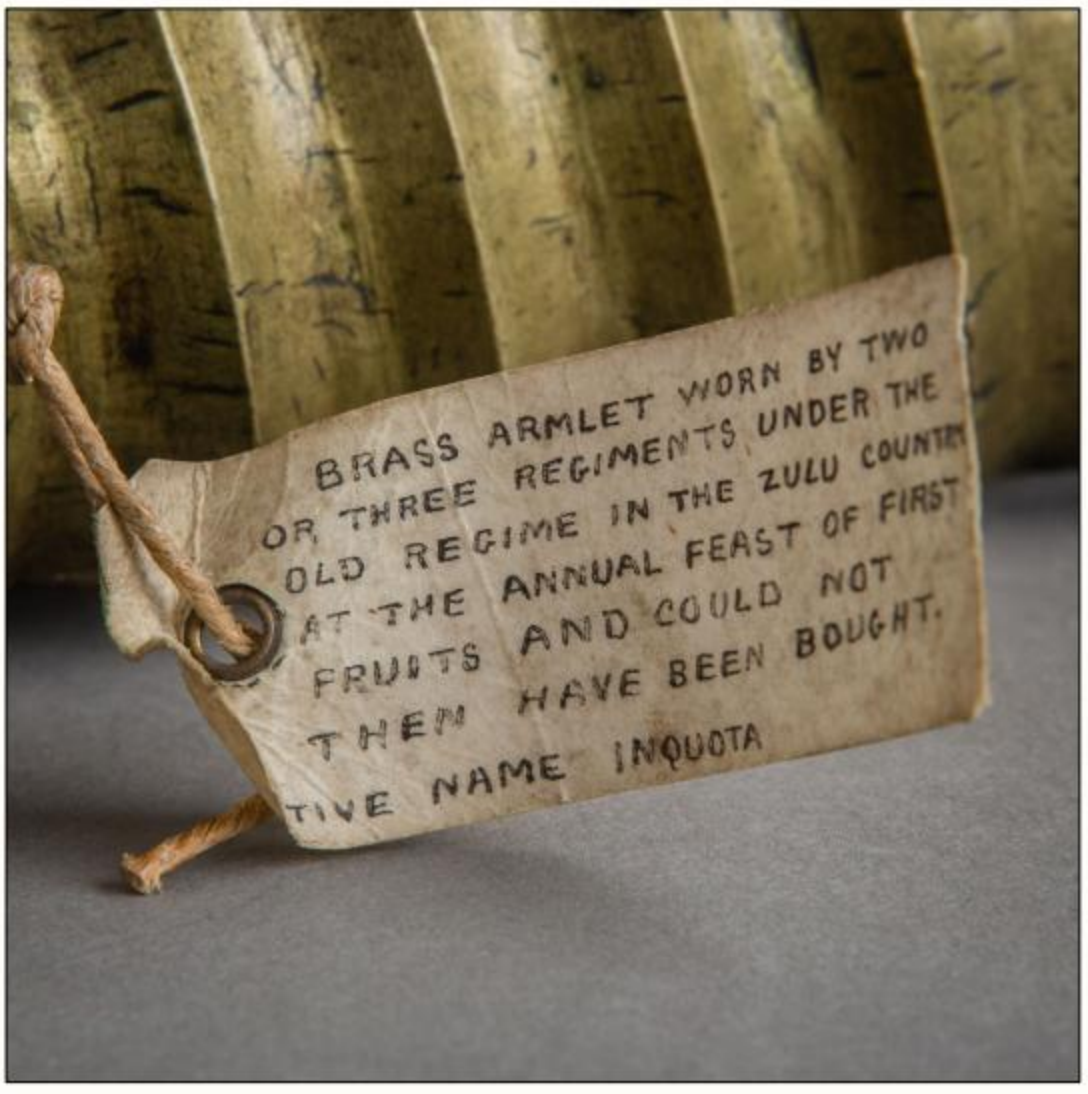
ARMLET, *INGXOTHA*

Zulu, South Africa

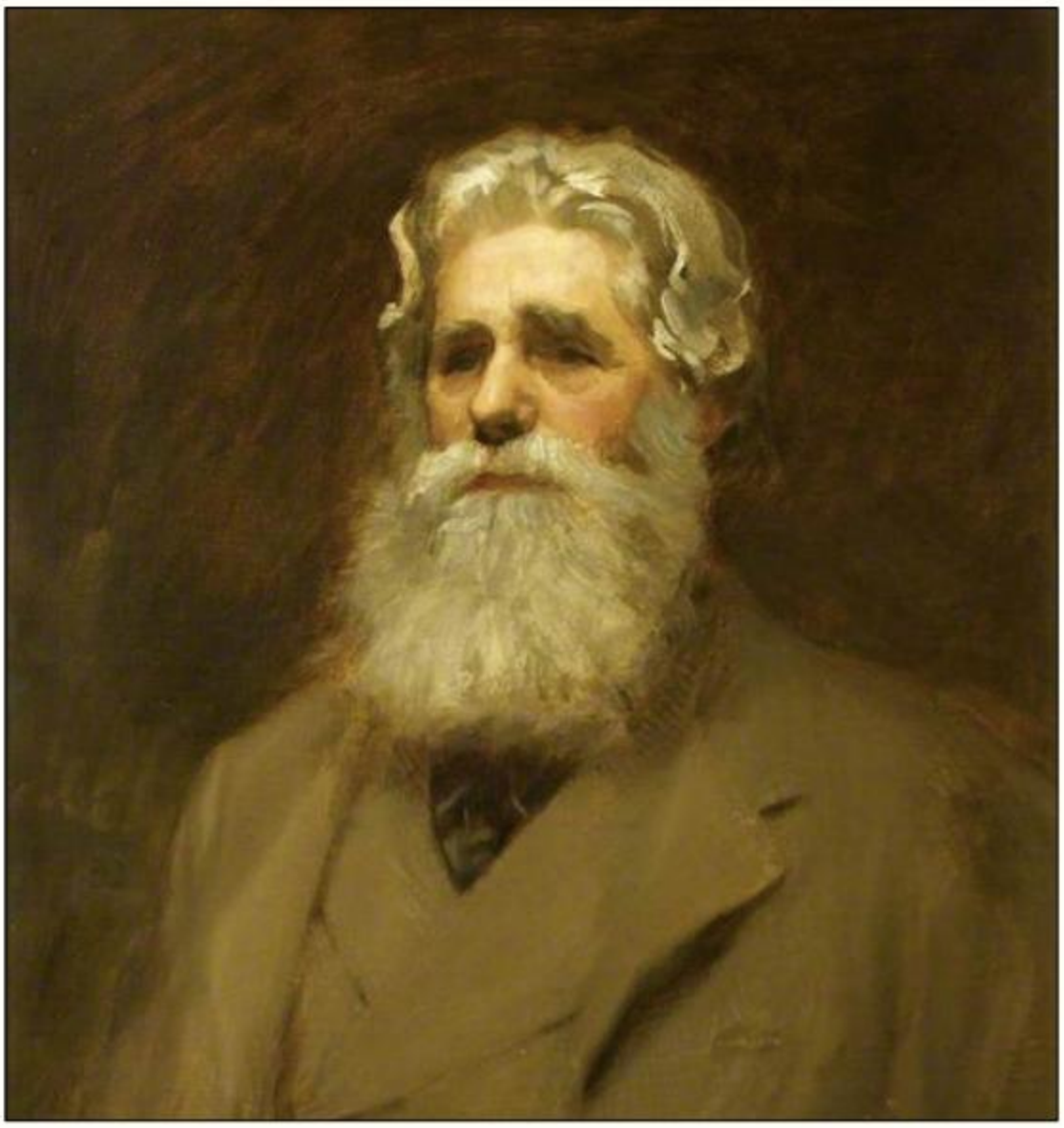
19th century
7" l
Brass
Provenance: Lt. Gen. Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers; Kevin Conru
Published in *The Art of Southeast Africa,* 2008

Ingxotha are heavy brass armlets with ribbed exteriors. They were worn around the lower arm by Zulu kings, who also awarded brave warriors and senior advisors their own to indicate their rank. Only three kings were known with certainty to have awarded *ingxotha*: Dingane (1795-1840), Mpande (1798-1872) and Cetshwayo (1826-1884). Around twenty examples remain today, including three examples in the British Museum. The armlet was cast with the design from a single sheet of brass and the inner side left smooth. The wearer had his arm bound with wet hides, and the partly bent, red-hot armlet was then beaten around the arm to encircle it. From then on it was unable to be removed and remained on the wearer for life, buried with a warrior in death and at times even cut off the body of a fallen soldier by British troops to be taken as war booty.

Illustration of King Mpande wearing an ingxotha. *Taken from George French Angas' 1849 series entitled* The Kafirs Illustrated, *which included plates depicting local ethnic groups in South Africa.*


BRASS ARMLET WORN BY TWO
OR THREE REGIMENTS UNDER THE
OLD REGIME IN THE ZULU COUNTRY
AT THE ANNUAL FEAST OF FIRST
FRUITS AND COULD NOT
THEM HAVE BEEN BOUGHT.
TIVE NAME INQUOTA

PROVENANCE



Lt. Gen. Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers (1827–1900)

Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers, born the son of a wealthy landowning family in Yorkshire, England, entered the Royal Military Academy in 1841 and the Grenadier Guards in 1845. Distinguishing himself at an early stage in research on rifles, Pitt Rivers went on to hold a variety of roles in his military career, traveling throughout Europe and as far as eastern Canada and the Crimea. Inheriting considerable wealth and land in 1880, he eventually retired in 1882, still in his mid-fifties.

Widely noted for his aloof, unsociable personality, Pitt Rivers was most at home in scientific, intellectual discourse and was possessed of broad knowledge in a great many fields of inquiry. During his military years he had taken a great interest in ethnology and archaeology, and had begun collecting related material which he organized under scientific standards for typology and chronology. By the time he retired, Pitt Rivers had amassed a collection of tens of thousands of objects from around the world. These formed the basis of the Pitt Rivers Museum, opened in 1884, which is now regarded as one of the world's most important ethnological museums.

The estates Pitt Rivers inherited were found to contain a wealth of archaeological material from the Roman and Saxon periods, which Pitt Rivers excavated from the mid-1880s until his death. His exacting approach to archaeology, which held that all artifacts from a site must be excavated and duly catalogued as important elements in an ethnological and historical narrative, was a profound innovation for the time and is now acknowledged as his greatest contribution to science.

WAR CLUB, *U'U*
FASHIONED INTO A HAND CLUB
Marquesas Islands

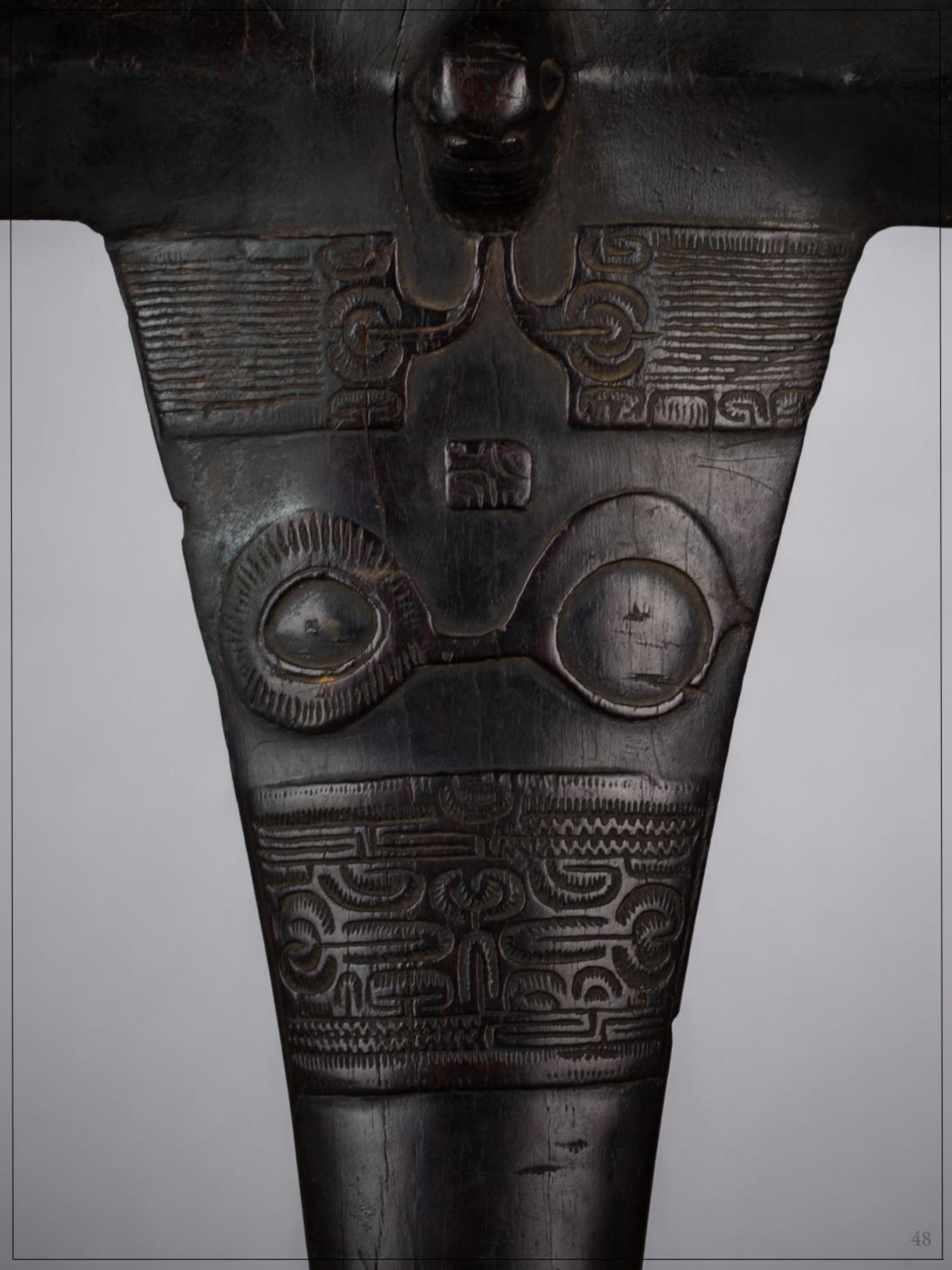
18th century
21.5" h 6.25" w
Ironwood
Provenance: Lynda Cunningham, New York

Of all Oceanic weapons, few are more memorable and iconic than the *U'u*. These impressive ironwood clubs were the most precious possession a Marquesan warrior owned, serving as both a deadly melée weapon and a powerful emblem of social status. *U'u* take their lustrous, black finish from time spent buried in the mud of taro fields, after which they were unearthed and polished with coconut oil.

U'u are designed for utility as well as potent symbolism, and the anthropomorphic impression they carry is not soon forgotten. The "head" of the club is double-sided, each opposed surface being carved to resemble a human face. Projecting knobs in the form of small heads suggest eyes and nose, while curves around the eyes form eye sockets and brows. Flanking the face are two squared flanges, horizontally projecting from the club to suggest either ears or a nose seen in profile. Over the surface of the club, other motifs of eyes and heads are found carved in low relief.

The presence of so many faces and eyes on these weapons may have been intended to invoke the power and protection of the ancestors in combat. The janiform design, with its unblinking twin gazes, may have provided increased awareness and safety to a warrior.

Highly unusual and possibly unique among all known *U'u*, this particular example features a Tongan lug at the base. It is conceivable that the shaft of the club, which in its classic form is quite long, had broken at some point during its long life, and the weapon was repurposed by a Tongan into a fearsome hand club.



PROVENANCE

Lynda Cunningham (1943–2016)

Lynda Cunningham took a job with American Airlines in the mid-1960s to achieve her dreams of world travel. Her first trip to New Guinea in 1968 marked the beginning of a lifelong passion for the traditional art of Oceania, one that would take her back to the South Pacific many times over the next decade. Cunningham's travels were both challenging and exciting, and she was fortunate to meet a guide in Port Moresby who was able to secure access for her to areas where she could trade and buy art. At that time it was a rarity for an American woman to explore this area of the world and discover such an appreciation for the art of the indigenous people.

Cunningham's fascination with – and accumulation of – Pacific art soon motivated her establishment as a dealer, and during the early 1970s she opened Oceanic Primitive Arts on East 10th Street in New York City, where she traded in objects from New Guinea as well as material from Vanuatu, Australia, and elsewhere. She regularly participated in art fairs and lectured throughout the United States on the art of New Guinea.

MASK, *DEAN GLE*

Dan, Liberia

Late 19th century
10" h 6.25" w
Wood, fiber
Provenance: Morris J. Pinto, New York; Loudmer; Patricia Withofs, London (and by descent through the family); Sotheby's; Myron Kunin
Exhibited in *Masks from the West African Dan People*, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, June 12–November 28, 2010

This superb Dan mask is characterized by its pointed oval face, slit eyes, high forehead, elegant nose, opened mouth and glossy, black patina. Sensitively carved features and smooth facial planes conjure an air of serene beauty and grace. Lengths of braided fiber form the mask's coiffure, framing the face behind the cheekbones.

One of the most iconic of all traditional Dan art forms, *dean gle* represent just one type of forest spirit *(gle)* that desires engagement and communication with the human world. Once the spirit is dreamt by, and reveals its function to, an initiated member of a men's society, with the approval of the elders' council, a mask of the *gle* will be carved for the initiate to dance, accompanied by a full-body costume constructed of raffia, feathers and fur. *Gle* masks are complex, unique entities and may evolve a great deal through lifespans several generations long, taking on new functions, features, and sometimes many names.

Though technically genderless, *dean gle* are typically regarded as feminine entities, personifying idealized beauty and approaching the community to nurture, instruct and delight.

PROVENANCE

Morris J. Pinto (1924–2009)

An art collector of international repute, Morris Pinto was born in Tangier, Morocco and joined the US Army in 1942 while attending Yale University. He saw combat in Italy, for which he received decorations for exemplary courage. Pinto went on to find success in business and finance, and was involved in the reconstruction of post-war Spain. In 1980, Pinto was personally decorated by King Juan Carlos of Spain for work by Pinto and his family on the restoration of the old city of Toledo.

Patricia Withofs (1934–1998)

London-based dealer and collector Patricia Withofs was born in Sydney, Australia in 1934. At the age of twenty she was already collecting the traditional art of Australia, Africa and the South Pacific, and soon thereafter developed an interest in twentieth-century art. Withofs was fascinated by the connections between primitive and modern art, traveling extensively in the Pacific and Africa to better understand the cultures of those regions and to expand her collection. She married the Belgian dealer René Withofs in 1961, and after 1969 dealt in art on her own.

Myron Kunin (1928–2013)

During his lifetime, Myron Kunin achieved tremendous success in the global beauty industry, transforming his family's small business in Minnesota into an empire encompassing thousands of salons and many major product brands. He had another calling, however, as a collector of African master-works. Focusing on major pieces of the highest quality, Kunin amassed one of the most impressive private collections of African art in the world, with a special focus on material from Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, and the Congo. The collection was dispersed after his death by Sotheby's in a single owner sale in 2014.

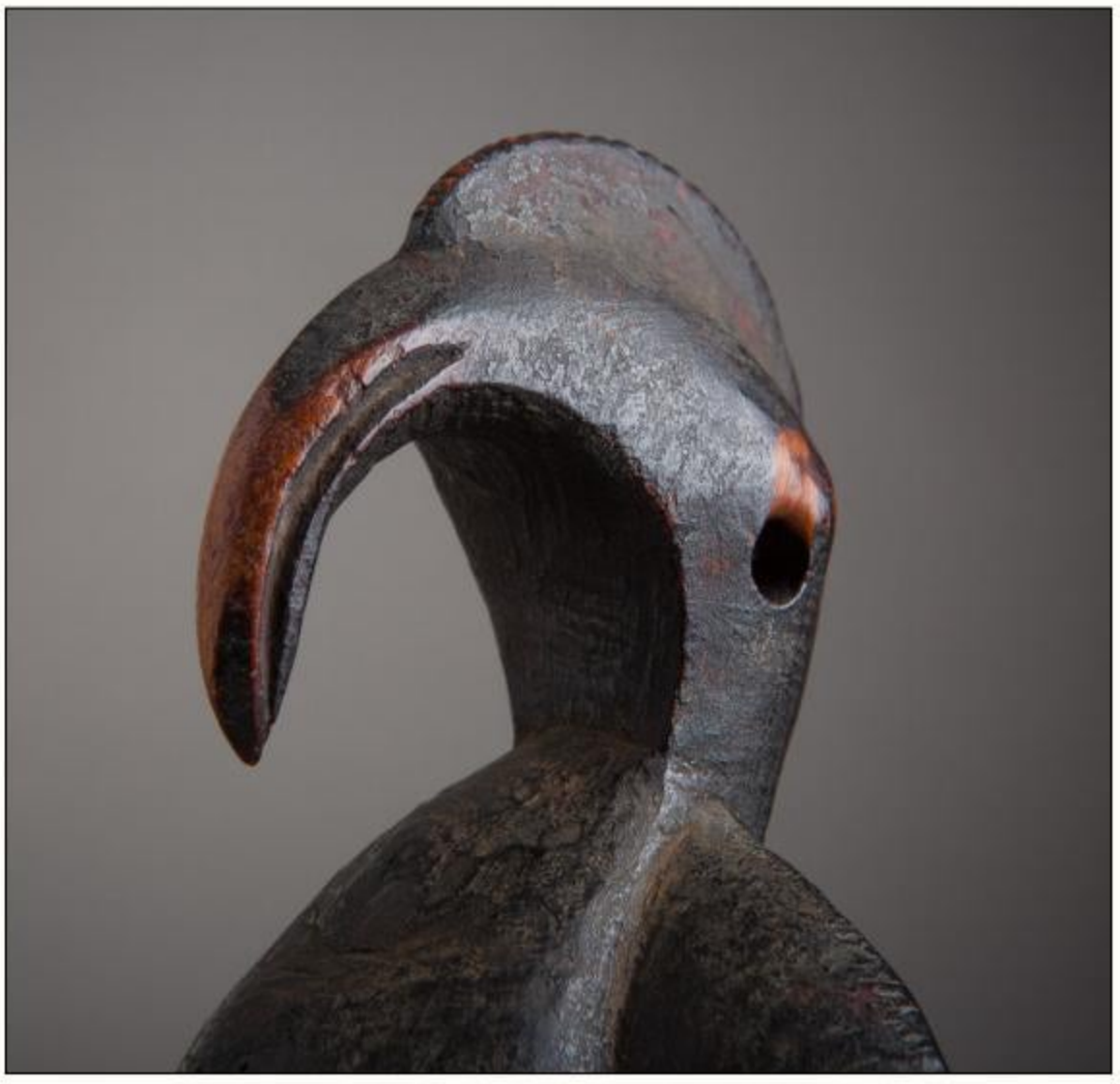
HEDDLE PULLEY

Senufo, Côte d'Ivoire

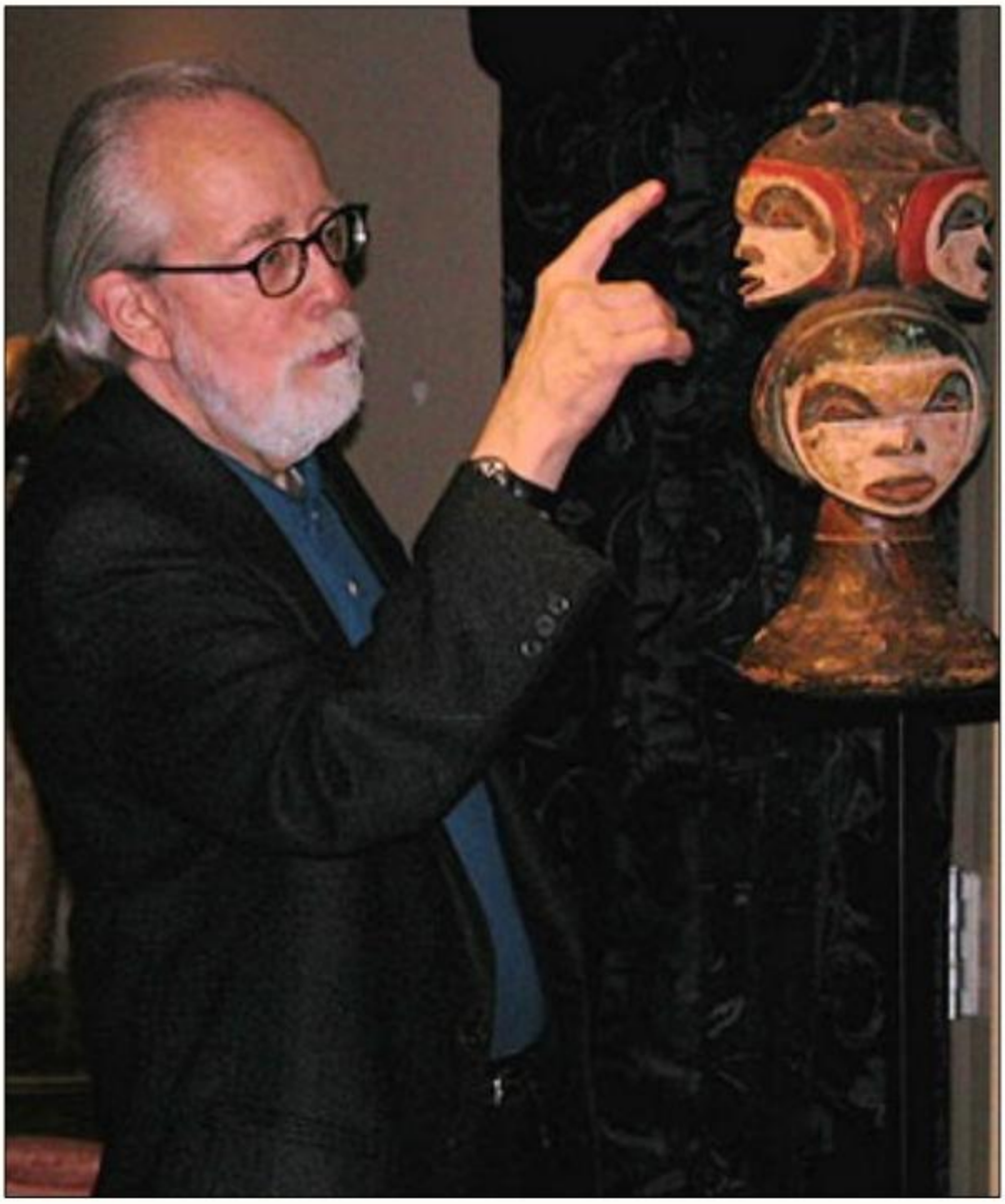
Early 20th century
6.75" h 4" w
Wood
Provenance: Noble Endicott

A deeply patinated pulley depicting an avian figure with anthropomorphic characteristics, dominated by an elongated, overhanging head with gracefully curved beak. The concavity of the figure's reverse side contrasts strongly with the obverse, from which projects a prominent, round belly. With weighty proportions, the sculptural mass transmitted by this piece far transcends its modest physical size.

Heddle pulleys are used in strip weaving, a process that uses very small looms to produce long, narrow strips of cloth that are later sewn together to create a larger textile, such as a blanket. The pulley is located at the very top of the loom and guides the weaver's thread.



PROVENANCE



Dr. Noble Endicott

Dr. Noble Endicott is a New York psychiatrist, now retired. A passionate collector since the early 1970s and a talented self-taught artist, Dr. Endicott has built a collection that spans the entire African continent and numbers almost a thousand objects, including many fine miniatures. Dr. Endicott and his wife, Jean, were originally collectors of nineteenth-century American art and bought their first African piece, a Guro pulley, at auction in 1968.

A perennial presence at New York art and antiques shows, Dr. Endicott has presented portions of his collection in numerous exhibitions and catalogues, including *African Art in American Collections, The Art of Collecting African Art*, and more. Dr. Endicott has also mentored many of New York's most respected dealers and collectors.

SNUFF SPOON, *INTSHENGULA*

Zulu, South Africa

19th century
5.5" l
Bone, ash
Provenance: King Cetshwayo

The taking of snuff was of fundamental personal and social importance among many tribes of southern Africa. It sharpened the senses, strengthened social ties as a communal act, and allowed degrees of communication with the ancestors. Accordingly, items associated with snuff were both ubiquitous and attractively designed.

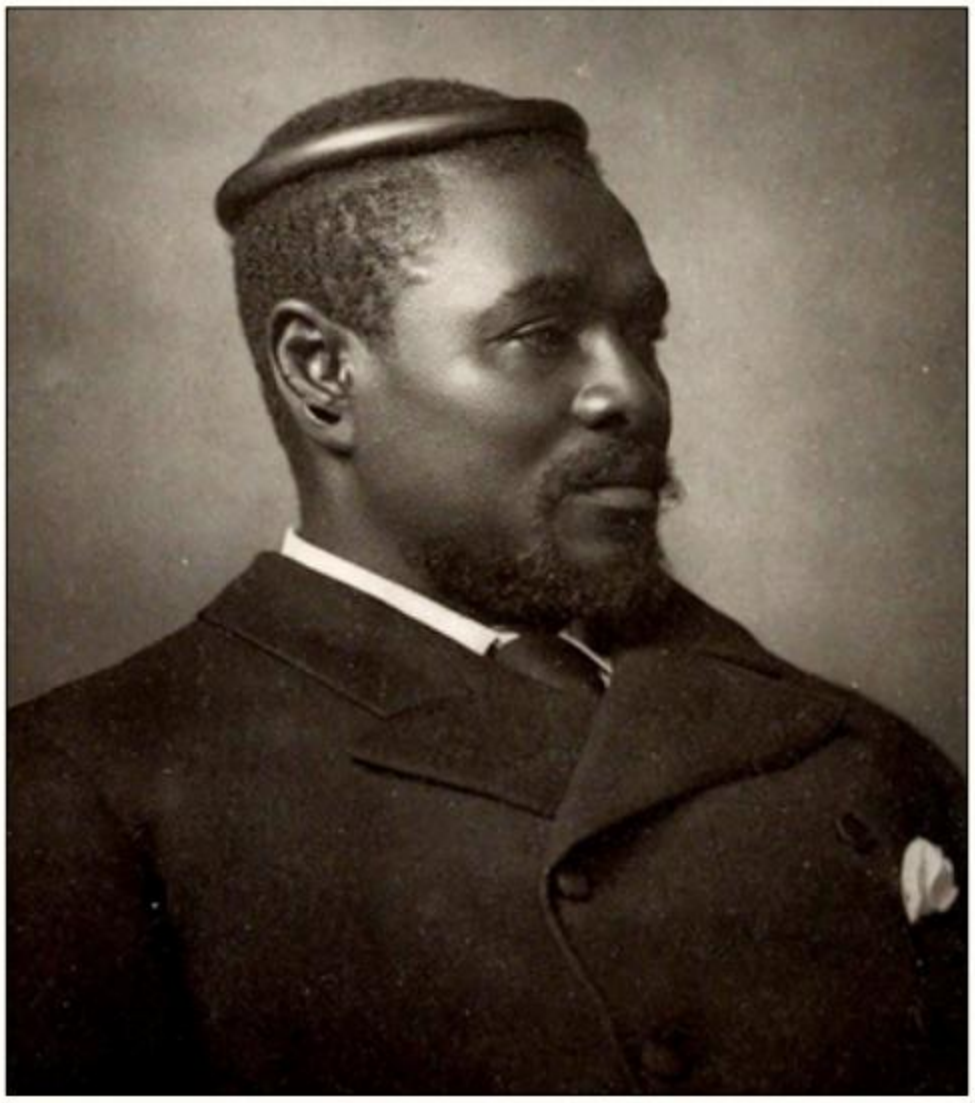
This beautiful bone snuff spoon, with its shallow bowl and slender handle, was intended to be worn as an accessory when not in use, either in the hair or slipped through the lobe of a pierced ear (note the prominent piercing in the ear of King Cetshwayo, pictured on page 62). The back of the spoon is decorated with patterns of minute incisions darkened with soot, the design of which seems to suggest the spine and flanks of cattle.

Attached is an old collection label attributing the spoon to "King Cetewayo." Though that provenance is not entirely certain, the fineness of the spoon's carving indicates it belonged to someone of high rank.

Collection label: "Formerly the property of late Zulu king Cetewayo"

Bone spoon for measuring
the Coke of the
Ear
Brought
from
1916

PROVENANCE



Cetshwayo kaMpande (1826–1884)

King Cetshwayo (or Cetewayo) was the last great ruler of the independent Zulu in South Africa. Reigning from 1872–1879, he was revered for the strength of his political and martial leadership, which reversed a decline in the Zulu kingdom's prestige and power that had marked the rule of his father, Mpande. Exploits of war were a shaping force for Cetshwayo, who took part in clashes against both Boer settlers and the neighboring Swazi during the mid-1800s. In time his influence only grew, and having emerged as the de facto leader of the Zulu in his father's old age, his own kingship was formalized in 1872.

When the British annexed the Boer republic of Transvaal in 1877 – and with it a portion of western Zululand – Cetshwayo became a target of British propaganda intended to provoke armed conflict. Cetshwayo's non-compliance with British demands precipitated the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, a conflict he had hoped to forestall through negotiation. After losses on both sides, Cetshwayo was captured and exiled, and regions of Zululand fell under British control. The Zulu monarchy was restored in 1882, but hostilities between Zulu factions led to violent civil strife and Cetshwayo ultimately lost power in 1883, the Zulu kingdom dissolving with it. Cetshwayo fled to his birthplace of Eshowe, by then a British administrative center, where he died in 1884.

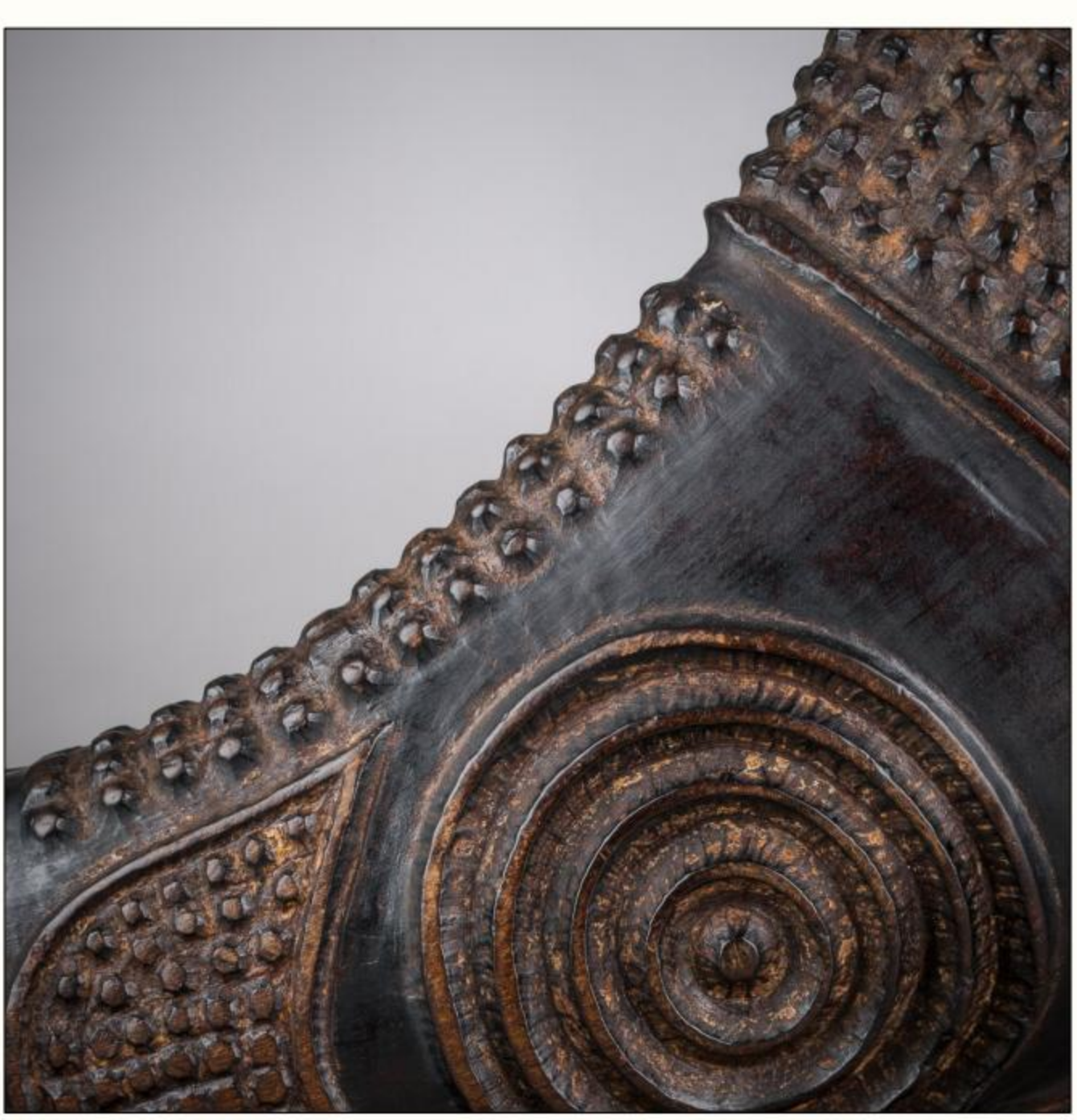
Illustration depicting Cetshwayo after his capture by the British in 1879

WINE HORN

Kuba, D.R. Congo

19th century
18" l
Wood
Provenance: Marc and Denyse Ginzberg

Palm wine horns were objects of high status among the Kuba, given as royal gifts and often owned by those of the warrior class. As icons of kingly largesse they were accordingly decorative, laboriously carved in low relief with patterns of studs, concentric rings, zigzags, and more. Their buffalo horn shape was emblematic of the power of their owners, who often carried them suspended from the belt. This horn shows meticulous, sharply defined carving and a lovely, dark patina with warm highlights.



PROVENANCE

Marc and Denyse Ginzberg

(Marc Ginzberg 1930–2012)

Sharing a remarkable partnership as appreciators and collectors of art, Marc and Denyse Ginzberg together built and re-built an incredible and multifaceted collection during their marriage of over sixty years. Marc, whose family founded commodities trading firm Golodetz, was raised in Manhattan. Denyse was born in France and moved with her family to Cuba in 1942, fleeing the Nazi regime, and afterward grew up in Mexico, where she acquired an interest in what she terms "folkloric art."

African art came as a sudden revelation to Denyse in the early 1970s in – of all places – a New York department store. An initial foray into collecting resulted, focusing on masks and statuary, which quickly deepened to a dedicated endeavor. After two decades of research and refinement the Ginzbergs had amassed one of the finest African art collections in the United States. Eventually opting to disperse that collection and begin anew, they achieved the same success once more in the non-figurative arena, bringing together a wealth of utilitarian and abstract masterpieces that was celebrated in the national exhibition, *African Forms: Objects of Use and Beauty from the Ginzberg Collection,* in 2004.

The Ginzbergs have been active supporters of the National Museum of African Art, part of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, and were among the founders of the Museum for African Art (now known as The Africa Center) in New York City.

PRESTIGE STAFF

Venda or Shangaan, South Africa

Late 19th or early 20th century
37" l
Wood, pokerwork
Provenance: Ernest Ohly; Egon Guenther; Sotheby's; Manuel Jordan

Evincing colonial influences, the meticulously rendered boot and hand present on this highly rare staff depict the shoes and gloves of nineteenth-century England. Leather goods were considered prestige objects in South Africa during that period, and here a shoe takes pride of place as the finial. This unusual piece expresses all the refined hallmarks of southern African woodworking techniques, but deviates from more classic forms not only in its combined choice of motifs but also the transitions from round to square in its shaft.

PROVENANCE

Egon Guenther examining a woodblock print by Cecil Skotnes

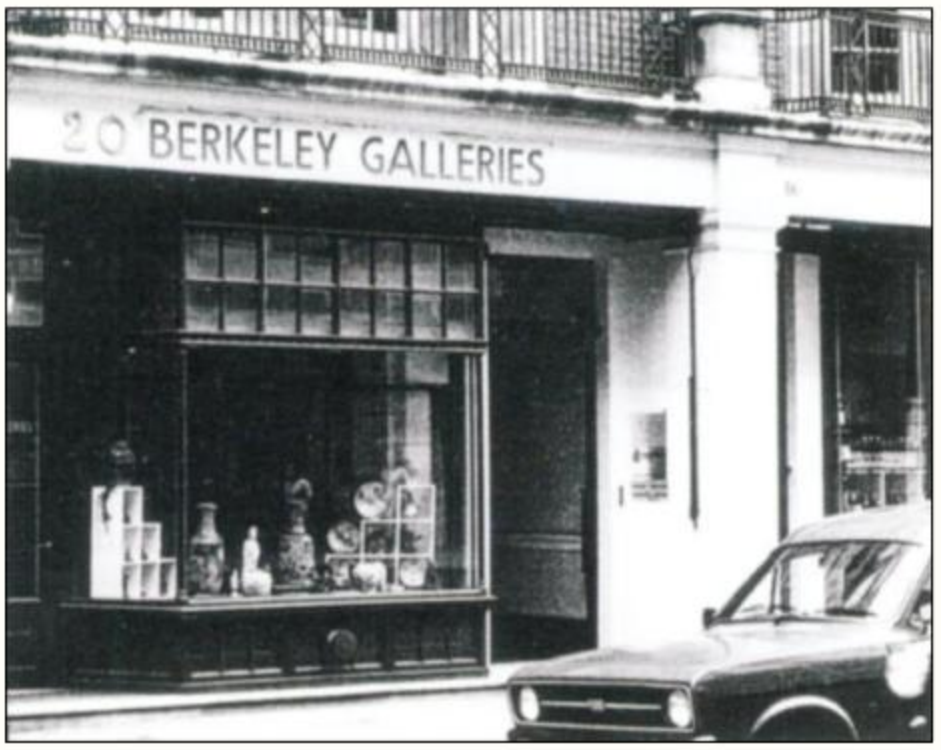
Egon Guenther (1921–2015)

Born in Mannheim, Germany, master printmaker Egon Guenther began collecting African art as a teenager. After WWII he began a gallery career, exhibiting African, Expressionist and Surrealist art in an attempt to reverse the effects of the Nazis' 'Entartete Kunst' programs. In 1951 he emigrated to South Africa, establishing a gallery in Johannesburg where he pursued a similar exhibition strategy. Though controversial in its early years, Guenther's approach fostered a long-term shift in the understanding of tribal art in South Africa.

Egon Guenther's home gallery

Ernest Ohly (1948–2010)

Ernest Ohly inherited the Berkeley Gallery in Mayfair, London from his father, ethnologist and collector William Ohly. Though Ernest closed the gallery in 1977, he continued to be an active collector and dealer. He and his father founded Berkeley Galleries after the Second World War and were known for their exhibitions of African and Oceanic art. In addition to tribal art, they exposed modern British artists such as Henry Moore, whose work in dialogue with 'primitive art' is very well documented.



FIGURAL PIPE

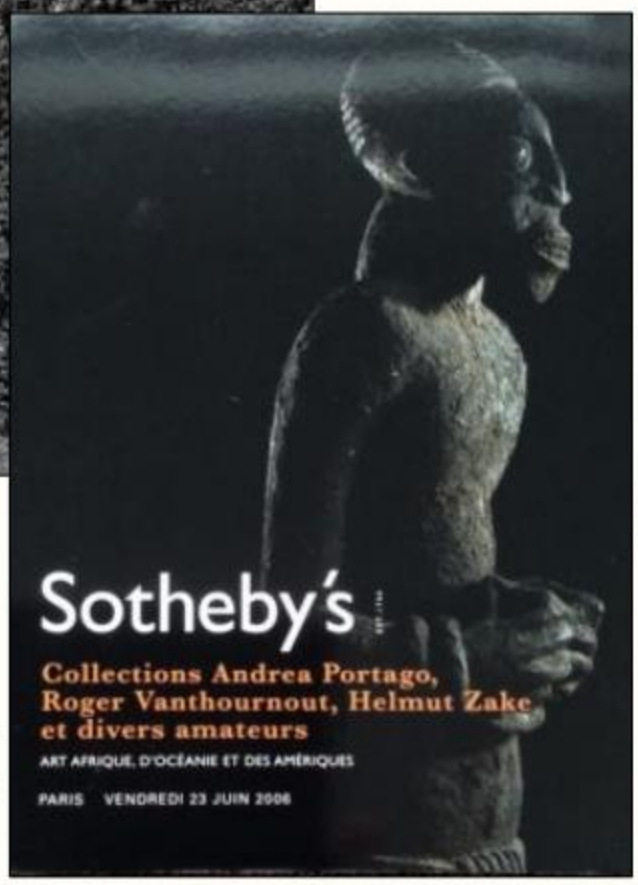
Yaka, D.R. Congo

Early 20th century
9.5" h 1.75" w
Wood, metal, fiber
Provenance: Helmut Zake

Angularity and a beautiful geometric inflection imbue the form of this extremely rare and compelling Yaka pipe. Standing poised with bent knees, as though about to set itself in motion, the figure emits an almost supernatural aura, enhanced by its greatly elongated neck. From the lightly touching fingertips at the breast the arms wrap fully around the stem of the pipe to the back, where one finds delineated scapulae and buttocks. The bowl of the pipe rests in the belly of the figure, while the head – carved with semi-abstracted features – doubles as a removable stopper.

PROVENANCE

University of Heidelberg Library



Sotheby's Paris catalogue for the sale of June 23, 2006, in which a portion of Zake's collection was dispersed

Helmut Zake (1918–1995)

German art historian and collector Helmut Zake had an abiding passion for African art that first bloomed in the early 1960s, when he discovered a Baule mask in the window of an antique shop. In 1983, while he was Director of Foreign Student Services and International Relations at the University of Heidelberg, Zake was urged by fellow collectors to found a society dedicated to the discussion of ethnology and African art. This group became known as the Heidelberger Gesprächskreis von Sammlern und Ethnologen (Heidelberg Roundtable of Collectors and Ethnologists), or, as it was affectionately dubbed, the "Cercle Zake." With Zake as its chairman, the group's guiding purpose was to place African works in their proper, meaningful cultural context and to determine how best to judge their quality. Over the years the Cercle Zake expanded, welcoming collectors from Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, and the Netherlands. Throughout his life as a collector Zake sought authenticity and artistic quality above all else.

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